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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terry Goddard Settles Lawsuit with Mesa Homeowners Association

(Phoenix, Ariz. – April 19, 2006) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced a settlement with the Sunland Village East Homeowners Association in Mesa. The agreement settles allegations that the HOA violated Arizona's Fair Housing Act by denying access to community rooms based on homeowners' religious affiliation.

According to court documents, over the last 12 years the LDS Family Home Evening Group met once a month for social purposes. The group is made up of residents within the HOA. It did not pay any fees during this time.

In March 2005, the HOA notified the LDS Family Home Evening Group that it would be required to pay a fee to use the community room. After the group objected to the fees, the HOA adopted a new rule in June 2005 that community rooms could not be used by any religious group.

The Homeowners Association is a non-profit corporation that conducts the business and manages the community facilities of this large housing community located in Mesa's East Valley area. Under Arizona's Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful for an HOA to discriminate against any person on the basis of religion in providing services or facilities in connection with the sale or rental of housing, including requiring different terms or conditions for use of those facilities.

The settlement, approved by Maricopa County Superior Court, requires the Sunland Village East Homeowners Association to:

- Adopt a revised room-use policy to the residents that eliminates religion as a factor for either charging for rooms or denying room requests. The policy also should outline the non-discriminatory rules to be applied to all who use community facilities.
- Provide training to the officers and employees of the homeowners association about Arizona's fair housing laws and make the training available to residents and homeowners.

- Provide the LDS Family Home Evening Group with a community room for its monthly meetings for the next year and treat the group the same as similar groups.
- Agree not to retaliate or interfere with the LDS Family Home Evening Group's right to use the community meeting room.
- Pay the Attorney General's Civil Rights Division \$1,000 for a two-year monitoring of the Homeowners Association's compliance with the Consent Decree and enforcement of the fair housing laws.
- Reimburse the LDS Family Home Evening Group for fees it paid for the use of the room and its reasonable attorneys' fees.

The Arizona Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin or disability. Any person who believes that his or her civil rights have been violated should call the Arizona Attorney General's Office Division of Civil Rights toll-free statewide at 1-877-491-5742 (voice) or 1-877-624-8090 (TTY).

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